

## Two Sechelt Auxiliaries: ku- and t'i-

Ronald C. Beaumont

University of British Columbia

### 1. Introduction.

ku- and t'i- belong to a sub-class of Sechelt auxiliaries<sup>1</sup> which refer to specific momentary events (acts, conditions, localizations) and emphasize the fact of each event itself rather than its duration ( čštwa- 'just now'; ku- ' ? ' ; tóx<sup>w</sup>- 'later'; t'a- 'there'; t'i- ' ? ' ; etc.). A contrasting sub-group consists of auxiliaries describing events that are habitual or enduring ( pála(ʔət)- 'always'; t'átqał- 'used to'; łál(ʔət)- 'continuing'; etc.). The auxiliaries ku- and t'i-, and particularly the latter, occur with great frequency and in statements of various kinds: reports within narrations, elicited and gratuitous assertions, counter-assertions, assurances and answers to general or specific questions. English sentences supposedly corresponding in meaning to Sechelt sentences containing these two auxiliaries often give the impression that ku- and t'i- have a tense-marking and/or deictic function in which they are sometimes in contrast with each other, and sometimes not. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the use of these auxiliaries by means of several examples, and to define them in terms of aspect, tense and deixis.



- (3) a. t'í - čən tśwuyat-si. I paid you back.  
punish-you
- b. kú- čən tśwuyat-si. I paid you back.
- (4) a. t'í - čən x<sup>w</sup>áx<sup>w</sup>aw. I am lost.  
be lost
- b. kú x<sup>w</sup>áx<sup>w</sup>aw čən kápu. My coat is lost.  
coat
- (5) a. t'í - cú ʔə šə spástən. He went to the  
to U.S.A. States.
- b. ku cú ʔə šə spástən. He went to the  
States.
- (6) a. t'í - stəwá xáxayam. He must be  
likely laughing. laughing.
- b. kú - stəwá xáxayam. He must have  
been laughing. been laughing.
- c. kú - stəwá xáxayam. He must be  
laughing. laughing.
- d. kú - stəwá xáxayám-ul. He must have  
past been laughing. been laughing.
- e. kú - stəwá xáyam-ul. He must have  
laughed. laughed.

- (7) a. stəx<sup>w</sup>ít kú - wał máymít. He is already  
truly feeble very low.
- b. t'í x<sup>w</sup>a ?ítutas nát-ul. He didn't sleep  
not sleep night-past last night.
- (8) a. t'í - wał lúwluwi tə čičím. The fire is go-  
going out fire ing out.
- b. kú - wał lúwi čə čičím. The fire has  
gone out.
- (9) a. t'í - čən-wał cú. I am going now.
- b. kú - čən-wał tšx<sup>w</sup>nšx<sup>w</sup>an. I know (it) now.  
understand
- (10) a. t'í - čən-wał k'<sup>w</sup>š'lnšx<sup>w</sup>an čən I spilled my  
spill (it) water. ("just  
now")  
s?íwuc.  
water
- b. kú - čən k'<sup>w</sup>š'lnšx<sup>w</sup>an čən s?íwuc. I spilled my  
water. ("before")
- (11) a. t'í - čən-wał ní ?ə tí! I'm here!  
be here  
somewhere

- b. kú - čx<sup>w</sup> nəčá ?  
you where?  
Where are you?
- (12) a. t'i sk'ú?išít ?ə šən ?áličín.  
standing back  
He is standing behind me.
- b. ku sk'ú?išít ?ə šən ?áličín.  
He is standing behind me. ("I can't see him, but I know he's there.")
- c. t'i ní lən tán.  
mother  
My mother is here.
- d. ku ní lən tán.  
My mother is here. ("You can't see her.")
- (13) a. t'í ?aq'áwal lə x<sup>w</sup>amímanas ?ə  
choke old woman  
The old woman choked on the bird bone and she died.  
čə šáw-s čə sq'<sup>w</sup>álaš, qəm t'i  
bone-its bird then  
q'<sup>w</sup>úy.  
die
- b. t'í - čən t'úc'utan čə tatčúl-  
shoot animal  
I shot the animal, and it fell dead.  
mix<sup>w</sup>, qəm ku q'<sup>w</sup>úy.



or past events, ku- and t'i- do not mark tense. Indeed, many apparent contradictions in Sechelt ku- and t'i- predicates can be attributed to the fact that the marking of tense (past or future) is not obligatory in Sechelt if the tense is evident from the context.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, many isolated sentences in Sechelt will be as ambiguous as the English sentence "I'm going to town." when it is heard out of context.

Some of the sets listed above do, however, seem to indicate a contrast in tense between ku- and t'i-. In set 6 for example, three out of four predicates introduced by ku- are translated as past or perfect tenses in English, whereas the one t'i- predicate is rendered as a present tense. And in set 10 the informant volunteered that sentence a. (t'i-) referred to the immediate past, but that sentence b. (ku-) indicated a point farther back in time. In set 14, where both sentences describe consecutive events in the past and are rendered by complex sentences in the English translations, the prior events are introduced by ku- and the succeeding events by t'i-. And yet the opposite appears to be the case in 13 b. It will be seen that all of these apparent contrasts are deictic rather than temporal.

## 4. Deixis.

Several sentences in the above sets suggest the contrasts present/absent or visible/invisible ( 4 a,b; 8 a,b; 11 a,b; 12 a,b; 12 c,d; 14 a), with t'i- marking present or visible and ku- indicating absent or invisible. The informant's comments following the translations of 12 b and d certainly point in this direction. In set 12, however, the referent is presumably invisible to the speaker in both sentences, and he need not be "absent" in either.

Deictic distinctions existing in certain Sechelt demonstratives lend themselves to comparisons which may shed light on the relationship between ku- and t'i-:

tím (contraction of tí-λum) 'this (here) one': definite  
visible  
near

wát-la tí-λum? Who is this,that?

tám (contraction of tá-λum) 'that (there) one': definite  
visible  
distant

wát-la tá-λum? Who is that?

k<sup>w</sup>ám (contraction of k<sup>w</sup>á-λum\*) 'that thing' :definite  
invisible

pála?ət cúcut ?ə k<sup>w</sup>ám. He is always saying that.





These examples yield the following pattern of deictic relations :

ku- : definite (event), invisible, ---  
t'i-: definite " , visible , near  
t'a-: definite " , visible , distant

where the significant contrast is in the category of (in)-visibility, since ku- is undetermined for proximity (see sentences 5 b and 12 b). The application of the terms "definite" and "invisible" to events is convenient because it preserves the parallel between the auxiliaries in question and the demonstratives noted above. When applied to the auxiliaries (hence, to "events") the term "definite" can be understood as "specifying a particular momentary event", and the term "invisible" can be taken provisionally as meaning "occurring out of sight". Frames of reference for invisibility will be discussed below.

This patterning of ku-, t'i- and t'a- does not, however, explain sentences where t'i- introduces predicates describing visually remote events (sets 1 b and c; 2 b and d; 3 a; 7 b; 13 a and b; etc.), or pairs in which ku- and t'i- appear to be in free variation ( 2 b and c; 5 a and b; 6 a and c; etc.). In order to account for these sentences we must examine the rôle of t'i- in its contrast with t'a- on the one hand, and with ku- on the other. In the t'i-/t'a-

pair the shared categories are definiteness (specificity of "event") and visibility. The contrasting category is that of proximity. But the much more extensive use of t'i-, and the fact that it occurs with predicates describing events near or far, indicates that it is the neutral member of the pair. It is semantically unmarked for the category of proximity,<sup>5</sup> and specifies "near" only when drawn into contrast with t'a- (see C a and b). Similarly, t'i- is the neutral member of the pair t'i-/ku-. Here the category of definiteness is shared, and the potential contrast is in the category of invisibility. In other words, ku- is the positive member and always signals "definite and invisible", whereas t'i- merely indicates "definite" unless it is brought into contextual contrast with ku-.

In most instances the speaker is free to decide whether he wishes to stress the "definite" or the "invisible" component of a momentary event that he is describing. For example, in an affirmative answer to the Sechelt equivalent of the question "Have you had your dinner?", the speaker may choose to concentrate on the fact that he has had dinner by saying "t'í - čən-waɫ (kɔ́x̣<sup>w</sup>ux̣<sup>w</sup>mínəm)." Or he may want to stress that he had his dinner before the questioner arrived on the scene: "kú - čən-waɫ (kɔ́x̣<sup>w</sup>ux̣<sup>w</sup>mínəm)." In response to such questions as "What are you doing?" or

"When are you going to eat dinner?", he can point to the fact that he is now doing just that: "t'i - čən-(wał) kšx<sup>w</sup>ux<sup>w</sup>mínəm." Or he could say "kú - čən-(wał) etc.", thus stressing that he is having his dinner and that the questioner can't see the action. If the context of the speech situation is such that the questioner has no way of knowing whether the event has already taken place or is in progress ( e.g. a conversation on the porch or through a window), the ambiguity can be removed by adding -uł to the predicate to indicate "past" (cf. 2 d and 6 d and e). In a sentence like 9 b kú- is not obligatory, but possible, because of the perfective sense of tšx<sup>w</sup>nšx<sup>w</sup>- : what the speaker knows now he may have grasped outside of the speech situation. In sentence 4 a, however, t'i- is obligatory because the use of ku- would remove the speaker from the speech situation, and the statement could not mean "I am lost." The verb x<sup>w</sup>áx<sup>w</sup>aw-, although it can be used to describe a momentary condition, is basically non-perfective.

The frame of reference for the deictic category of invisibility can be 1) the speech situation or 2) the established context of a narrative (i.e. a story or a narration of events such as set 1 above). In the speech situation, ku- can be used to describe an event that occurs or has occurred out of sight of the speaker, the hearer (e.g. sen-

tence 10 b, where the informant's comment "before" really means "in your absence", which could be interpreted as meaning "before you came"), or both (sentence 3 b). In the case of an established narrative context, ku- can be used to indicate an event taking place (or having taken place) out of sight of the referent(s) in contextual focus at the point where the event is being described(see texts below).

The category of invisibility in Sechelt can apply to such events as disappearance, transformation or death. In sentence 1 d, for example, ku- stresses the disappearance of the referent's (speaker as referent) sleepiness. The same is true for the second clause of sentence 13 b, where the use of ku- emphasizes the disappearance of the living creature from the context. But in 13 a the use of t'i- in the second clause merely indicates the fact that the woman died.

Finally, it should be noted that the complex sentences in the English translations of sentences 14 a and b, and the temporal sequence of events that they imply, cannot be directly related to the use of t'i- and ku- in the Sechelt sources. Sentences 13 a and b could just as well be translated as complex constructions despite the entirely different t'i-/ku- pattern in the originals.

## 5. Excerpts from Sechelt texts.

The following excerpts from Sechelt texts<sup>6</sup> are presented in order to demonstrate the use of ku- and t'i- in contexts of meaningful length. The sentences are numbered to facilitate commentary.

A. From: Eagle and Owl

- 1) pálaʔət č'áč'λam tə k'áyək<sup>w</sup> ʔi tə sɣɣənik'.  
 always hunting eagle owl
- 2) x<sup>w</sup>áx<sup>w</sup>aynəx<sup>w</sup>-ásit tə qəɣ títatčulmíx<sup>w</sup>.  
 killing-they much animals of all kinds
- 3) stəx<sup>w</sup>ít qəɣ tə lánək<sup>w</sup>-it ʔi tə sɬíq<sup>w</sup> ʔə tə λəmstan-it.  
 truly hide-their meat house
- 4) x<sup>w</sup>ák<sup>w</sup>t syáqcəw-it.  
 none wife
- 5) ní ʔə tə pála sq'ílt, qəm t'i cú ʔímiwaš tə<sup>7</sup> t'əmšən-ali  
 one day walk two-people
- qíxnəx<sup>w</sup>íwas sɬənlanay.  
 related and women  
 of different age
- 6) t'i súx<sup>w</sup>t-asit tə λəmstan, qəm t'i cú təq'íš.  
 see sit down

7) t'i cú ɫə ɫíwít ʔə tə pála lɔʔaɫ, qəm t'i cú ɫə qɔʔti  
                   older                                  bed                                  younger  
                   one  one

ʔə tə pála lɔʔaɫ.  
                   other

8) t'i cú nánat, qəm t'i q<sup>w</sup>ɔʔɫ' ʔəmíwət tə k'áyək<sup>w</sup>.  
                   evening                                  comes home

9) t'i x<sup>w</sup>á x<sup>w</sup>úx<sup>w</sup>as, qəm t'i ɫ'al q<sup>w</sup>ɔʔɫ' ʔəmíwət tə sɫíxəník'.  
                   not long                                  also

10) ʔíy tə q<sup>w</sup>áliwan-it tə stɔmtumiš ʔə tə syálaqcəw-it.  
           good  heart-their  men                                  wives-their

11) ɫə qɔʔti syáqcəw-s tə k'áyək<sup>w</sup>.  
                   wife-his

12) ʔíy míman tə mɔna-s.  
           child  offspring-hers

13) ɫə ɫíwít syáqcəw-s tə sɫíxəník'.

14) húham tə s-ná-s mɔna.  
           frog  own-hers

15) t'i cú pɔk<sup>w</sup>s-at-as ʔə tə cəlʔaɫ.  
                   throw it                                  lake

16) ?ówuq'<sup>W</sup> sq'ílt s-cú-s č'ač'ač'áám-it.  
 every going-its hunting-their

17) t'i x<sup>W</sup>á x<sup>W</sup>úx<sup>W</sup>as, qəm t'i x<sup>W</sup>á ?əmíwət-ásit.  
 not long not come home-they

18) łáq'ám tə syálaqcəw-it.  
 wait

19) t'í λum s-cútiwan-it tə slónlanay:  
 then thinking-their

20) níl-i?ya łə sx<sup>W</sup>ənam ku x<sup>W</sup>áyat čəms swálaqac-ul.  
 it must be monster kill our husbands-deceased

Eagle and Owl were always hunting. They killed many animals of different kinds. They had a lot of hides and meat in their house. But they had no wives.

Then one day two sisters(or cousins) went for a walk. They caught sight of the house, went in and sat down. The older sister went to one bed, and the younger went to the other.

When evening came Eagle got home. It wasn't long before Owl came too. The men were happy about their wives. The younger sister became the wife of Eagle. She got a good child. The older sister became Owl's wife. Her child was a frog. She went and threw it into the lake.

Every day the men went hunting. It wasn't long before they



failed to come home. Their wives waited. Then they thought: the monster must have killed our husbands.

B. From: The Sun Story

1) t'i pək<sup>w</sup>s tə syášən-s ʔə tə sʔiwuc.  
falls pack-his water

2) t'i k<sup>w</sup>ənat-as, t'i k<sup>w</sup>ənat-as, t'i k<sup>w</sup>ənat-as ...  
grabs it

3) qəm t'i cú tás ʔə tə ʔəp sʔiwuc, qəm ku miymayšəliq  
there deep water drowns

tə x<sup>w</sup>ámimanas.  
old man

4) qəm ku səlɣ<sup>8</sup> čə x<sup>w</sup>ámimanas-ul.  
floats away deceased

His pack fell into the water. He tried to grab it, tried to grab it, tried to grab it.... Then, when he got into the deep water, the old man drowned. Then the old man floated away.

Comments:

A. Sentences 1 to 4 describe general circumstances of the lives of Eagle and Owl. The real "action" of the story

starts in sentence 5 and, from there to the end of sentence 9, t'i- appears in every clause. Sentences 10 to 16 deal with the general circumstances, rather than the specific momentary occurrences, of family life: who was whose mate, what kind of offspring were produced, the daily hunting activities of the men. The only specific act here, that of the woman throwing the frog into the lake, is introduced by t'i- (sentence 15). Sentence 17 describes a particular event: the failure of the men to come home (it is possible to use ku- here, because from the point of view of the wives the "event" occurs somewhere else), and the fact that it was only after a short time. The absence of t'i- in sentence 18 is appropriate, since the waiting was probably of some duration. In sentence 19 t'i- indicates the specific act of reaching a conclusion, and the ku- of sentence 20 points to a particular event that the women believe to be a fact. The supposed event has occurred somewhere else, beyond their sight.

It may appear that ku- and t'i- could both be translated in some clauses of a passage like this as "then" or "now" (with historic present) in the sense of "here is what happens next". However, the forms qəm 'then(when)' and λum 'there, then' perform this function already. They are indicators of sequence and correspond closely to "then"

or "now" of an English narrative. English just does not have neat equivalents of ku- and t'i-.

B. This passage is from the main body of the Sun Story. Every sentence here deals with a specific momentary event. In sentence 3 ku- underlines the man's death: as a living man he has disappeared from the contextual focus. He is "out of the picture". In sentence 4 ku- points to the physical remoteness of the corpse from the scene of the recent action. In either case ku- could be replaced by t'i-, and the passage would then be merely a narration of events.

## 6. Summary.

1) ku- and t'i- belong to a sub-group of adverbial auxiliaries, the members of which focus on momentary events as opposed to habitual or sustained events, which are introduced by members of a contrasting sub-group of auxiliaries. This contrast can be regarded as aspectual.

2) ku- and t'i- do not signal tense distinctions. Tense is marked by the suffixes -u (past) and -sk<sup>w</sup>a (future), which are appended to the predicate centre. Tense marking is not obligatory in Sechelt if the temporal location of the event described is unambiguous (i.e. evident from the

context). These auxiliaries are tense restricted only in so far as they do not occur with future tense.

3) In addition to their shared aspectual function ku- and t'i- have a deictic relationship based on the category of invisibility. ku- is the positive member of the pair and always introduces specific momentary events that are invisible. When the contrast is realized, t'i- points to specific momentary events that are visible. But in most of its occurrences t'i-, being the neutral member of the pair, simply refers to the event itself, without reference to visibility<sup>9</sup>. The frame of reference for the category of invisibility is either the speech situation or an established narrative context. For the former, invisibility means "out of sight of the speaker, the hearer or both"; for the latter it means "out of sight of the referent(s) currently within the contextual focus.

4) Most difficulties in interpreting ku- and t'i- are encountered in isolated sentences, where insufficiency of context produces ambiguities. And the confusion is magnified, rather than dispelled, if the Sechelt deictic category of invisibility is approached from the point of view of proximity and tense, which are more familiar to the speaker of English. In context, ku- and t'i- are seldom hard to understand, although the full implication of their

meaning is seldom easy to translate.

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>The head of a Sechelt clause consists of:

1) a simple predicate, to which various particles may be attached: e.g. tense suffixes, the interrogative suffix, and primary personal enclitics.

cú - čən - sk<sup>w</sup>a ʔə šə čáw.      'I'm going to the  
go    I       fut.                    beach'.

2) a complex predicate (cf. Thompson and Thompson 1971: 263), of which the auxiliary is the first member. To the auxiliary are attached the interrogative suffix (-a), primary personal clitics and certain adverbial particles (such as - wal 'already, now'). The predicate centre, a separate word, follows and, if transitive, takes secondary personal enclitics.

t'í - čən    póləmnáx<sup>w</sup>- an.      ' I dropped it'.  
aux.    I       drop (it)    I (sec.)

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Jennie Erickson, of Sechelt, B.C., to whom I am deeply indebted for her many hours of patient assistance.

<sup>3</sup>Sechelt citations are in a tentative phonemic transcription (slashes omitted) indicating the contrasts crit-

ical to this analysis.

<sup>4</sup>Iterative reduplication may or may not constitute a determining part of the context. In set 6 above, the employment of reduplication does not affect the choice of auxiliary. But in set 8 the combination of auxiliary and the presence or absence of reduplication can alter the meaning:

t'í - wał łúwi tə čičím. 'The fire has gone  
out.'

kú - wał łúwłúwi čə čičím. 'The fire (elsewhere)  
is going out.'

(see: Deixis)

The difference appears to depend on whether or not the unreduplicated form of the verb has perfective meaning. Similarly, a verb such as k'ł'lnóx<sup>w</sup>- (set 10) will not occur with present progressive meaning, because the suffix -nóx<sup>w</sup> implies that the action has been completed.

<sup>5</sup>For a somewhat similar distribution of deictic clitics in Squamish, see Kuipers (1967:157f.).

<sup>6</sup>These excerpts are based on texts in Hill Tout (1904: 47 and 40 resp.). The present transcription and emendations were made with the assistance of Mrs. Jennie Erickson.

Hill Tout calls t'i- an "aorist or indefinite past ... particle" (1904: 71), but he associates it with the "present perfect" tense of transitive verbs (1904:72ff.). He describes ku- as a "temporal-locative" particle referring to "something that has taken place elsewhere and earlier" (1904:42f.), but he evidently fails to associate it with t'i-.

The Shuswap proclitic m-, which appears to have a function similar to that of Sechelt t'i-, has been likened to an aorist: see Kuipers (1974: 80f.).

<sup>7</sup>Although there appear to be a number of inconsistencies in the forms of articles in these texts, I have left them as they were confirmed or corrected by my informant. My analysis of article forms in Sechelt is incomplete.

<sup>8</sup>Hill Tout (1904:40) has Tē kwō-sÉluq ... (i.e. \*t'i-ku sálx ...). Mrs. Erickson categorically rejected this combination of t'i- and ku-, and said that either the one or the other, but not both, could be used here. I suspect that Hill Tout's informant started to say "t'i-sálx", then changed to ku- halfway through the phrase.

<sup>9</sup>Preliminary investigation suggests a corollary with switching of rôles in the interrogative counterparts of



ku- and t'i- : k<sup>w</sup>á- (? < ku-a) and t'á- (? < t'i-a).

súx<sup>w</sup>t - ul - a - čx<sup>w</sup> čən syáya ?

'Have you (ever) seen my friend?'

k<sup>w</sup>á - čx<sup>w</sup> súx<sup>w</sup>t čən syáya ?

'Do/did you see my friend?'

t'á - čx<sup>w</sup> súx<sup>w</sup>t čən syáya . ?

'Do/did you see my friend?'

Here, t'á- appears to be the positive member of the pair, stressing the request for affirmation or denial. k<sup>w</sup>á- is the neutral, and by far the most frequently occurring, member.

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